



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,291	07/10/2003	Constantin Hauer	TRW(ASG)6651	2651

7590

10/17/2005

TAROLLI, SUNDHEIM, COVELL, TUMMINO & SZABO L.L.P.  
526 SUPERIOR AVENUE  
1111 LEADER BLDG.  
CLEVELAND, OH 44114-1400

EXAMINER

LUONG, VINH

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3682

DATE MAILED: 10/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/617,291

Applicant(s)

HAUER ET AL.

Examiner

Vinh T. Luong

Art Unit

3682

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 5 and 6 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 7-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10 July 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received



Vinh T. Luong  
Primary Examiner

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on September 27, 2005 has been entered.

2. The drawings are objected to because each part of the invention, such as, (a) the portion and the axis of rotation in claims 1 and 3; and (b) the spoke in claims 9 and 10 should be designated by a referential numeral or character.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Art Unit: 3682

3. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter, such as, (a) the portion and the axis of rotation in claims 1 and 3; and (b) the spoke in claims 9 and 10. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction is required.

4. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7-9 and 11 are objected to because of the following informalities: the claims contain typographical or grammatical error, e.g., the period “.” in line 8 of claim 1 should have been a semicolon “;”. Appropriate correction is required.

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 2 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

It is unclear whether a confusing variety of terms, such as, (a) “a hub” and “a hub cup” in claim 2/1; and (b) “the axis of rotation” and “an axis of rotation” in claim 8/1 refer to the same or different things. See MPEP 608.01(o) and 2173.05(o).

7. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

8. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, and 9-12, and claim 2, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bohn et al. (US Patent No. 6,312,012).

Regarding claim 1, Bohn teaches a vehicle steering wheel (Figs. 1 and 3) comprising a skeleton 1-3 and a first detent element 10, 26 as part of a detent connection for connecting a gas bag module 5 to said skeleton 1-3, said skeleton 1-3 including a hub 1 and a portion 2 attached to

Art Unit: 3682

said hub 1 and extending away from said hub 1, said portion 2 sloping upwardly and outwardly away from said hub 1 with respect to a plane extending across the hub 1 and perpendicular to the axis of rotation of the steering wheel;

at least one separate support component 13 being *indirectly* arranged on said skeleton 1-3 (Fig. 1), said support component 13 carrying a detent pin 10, 26 as said first detent element 10, 26 which in an assembled state of the steering wheel, engages a second detent element 15, 19 arranged on said gas bag module 5 and complementary to said detent pin 10, 26.

Regarding claim 2, said skeleton 1-3 of said steering wheel comprises a hub cup 1 on which said support component 13 is arranged.

Regarding claim 3, see regarding claim 1 above and note that said support component 13 is a metal plate.

Regarding claim 4, said support component 13 and said detent pin 10, 26 inherently form a prefabricated assembly. In addition, note that the patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. *In re Thorpe*, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (CAFC 1985); *In re Brown*, 173 USPQ 685 (CCPA 1972); *In re Fessmann*, 180 USPQ 324 (CCPA 1974); *Ex parte Edwards*, 231 USPQ 981 (BPAI 1986); and MPEP 2113.

Regarding claim 7, said detent pin 10, 26 (Fig. 3) has no threads.

Regarding claims 9 and 10, said portion 2 defines a spoke.

Regarding claims 11 and 12, said portion 2 extends above said detent pin 10, 26.

9. Claims 5 and 6 are allowed.

Art Unit: 3682

10. Claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

11. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: Worrell et al. (spring 74) and Schenck (spring 50).

13. Applicant's arguments filed September 27, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The rejections based on Abers are withdrawn in view of Applicant's amendment. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4 and 7-12 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.


14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vinh T. Luong whose telephone number is 571-272-7109. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Ridley can be reached on 571-272-6917. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Luong

October 12, 2005



Vinh T. Luong  
Primary Examiner